

**Standard 6-3**

The student will demonstrate an understanding of the Middle Ages and the emergence of nation-states.

- 6.3.1** Explain feudalism and its relationship to the development of European nation states and monarchies, including feudal relationships, the daily lives of peasants and serfs, and the economy under the feudal/manorial system, and the fact that feudalism helped monarchs centralize power. (E, H, P)

**Taxonomy Level:** B 2 Understand/Conceptual Knowledge

**Previous/future knowledge:**

This is the first time students have been taught the concept of feudalism.

In Global Studies, students will summarize the functions of feudalism and manorialism in medieval Europe, including the creation of nation-states as feudal institutions that helped monarchies centralize power and the evolution of the relationship between the secular states and the Roman Catholic Church (GS-2.5).

**It is essential for students to understand** the feudal system of Europe, including how it functioned, and impacted the political development of Europe. Following the death of Charlemagne and fall of the Carolingian Empire much of the European mainland was subject to constant tribal warfare and invasions and offered little security and virtually no real political organization. From this chaos the feudal system developed and emerged as the political system to dominate Europe for several centuries. Students need to recognize the hierarchical nature of the feudal system based on reciprocal obligations and allegiances. Land and military protection/loyalty were the cornerstones of the feudal system. In exchange for land and/or protection people swore loyalty/service to those who granted this protection. The feudal system varied throughout Europe but its basic hierarchical structure had Kings, Lords, Vassals, and Peasants (also called serfs). What came to be known as the feudal system originally developed on a local level as people sought protection from the hazardous and barbaric times. It continued to develop, concentrically expanding, and was eventually utilized by powerful lords and kings to centralize military power and thus create nation-states. It's important to know that feudalism largely developed in Western Europe; especially in France, England, and the Low Countries, though it did spread into Spain, Eastern Europe, and eventually Russia. Under manorialism it was the peasants/serfs who did most of the actual work on the land-holdings of lords. The peasants were generally granted small parcels of land to grow crops for their family as well as to sell, but had to pay much of what they grew to the lords, either in taxes or as fees for using the lord's resources – such as the mill for grinding wheat. Furthermore, in addition to working his own land, the serf had to work the rest of the lord's land. The peasants could not sell the land granted to them, and while they were technically free, in reality, they were tied to the land on which they lived and could not leave without the lord's permission.

**It is not essential for students to know** cultural or social aspects of feudal entities, detailed information about castles or the role of individuals based on their gender. Students do not have to know the typical layout of manors.

**Assessment guidelines:** This indicator calls for students to explain and is causal in nature. Appropriate assessments would require students to **examine** the relationship between feudalism and the development of monarchies and nations-states, particularly in Western Europe. It is fitting that assessment would call for the **description** of feudal characteristics and connecting these characteristics to the developing European political structure. While students don't have to know the exact structure of a feudal system (since no one structure existed), they should be able to **recognize** and detail the hierarchical nature of the system.